



HAPPY NEW YEAR!

EMORY AIDS INTERNATIONAL TRAINING AND RESEARCH PROGRAM

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www.sph.emory.edu/AITRP

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WHAT'S NEW....

First, I'd like to first take an opportunity to wish you all a Happy New Year and to introduce you via our newsletter to our new fellows for the 2004-2005 school year. We are fortunate to have three outstanding first year fellows, their names are: Hong Nguyen (Vietnam), Duc Nguyen (Vietnam) and Archil Undilashvili (Georgia). In addition, our two second year fellows, Paulina Rebolledo (Mexico) and Akaki Turkia (Georgia) will be graduating this year. Our program has expanded to include Zambia and Rwanda as collaborating countries and we have two additional Fogarty fellows in those countries who are training through the distance learning program. Their names are Bellington Vwalika (Zambia) and Kayitesi Kayitenkore (Rwanda). You can read more about each one of our fellows later in this newsletter.

We are happy to report that our grant was renewed this year after a successful competitive renewal. Much of the reason why it was renewed was the proven track record of success of our trainees. Your accomplishments, publications and presentations at meetings were impressive and convinced the review panel that the Emory AITRP was indeed contributing to train the next generation of AIDS researchers.

As many of you may already know, Dr. Jennifer Hirsch who was the Associate Director of the AITRP left Emory and joined the faculty at Columbia University School of Public Health. We are all sad to see Jennifer go and wish her success in her future in New York City. If you want to contact her directly her E-mail is jsh2124@columbia.edu.

Some other developments in our program include the recruitment to Emory of Dr. Susan Allen from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Dr. Allen is a Professor of International Health at the Rollins School of Public Health. She established one of the earliest and now longest standing cohort studies in Africa, the Project San Francisco (PSF) in Kigali, Rwanda. And, after the genocide in 1994, she began also research programs in Lusaka, Zambia, (the *Zambia-Emory HIV Research Project – ZEHRP*) where an analogous research clinic has now recruited the largest single-site heterosexual HIV discordant couples cohort in

the world. Dr. Allen is now Associate Director for Zambia and Rwanda of the Emory AITRP.

In addition to Dr. Allen we are also fortunate to have Dr. Frances Priddy join our team. Dr. Priddy is the Associate Medical Director of the Hope Clinic of the Emory Vaccine Center. She is an experienced clinical researcher with emphasis on clinical trials of HIV prevention methods. Dr. Priddy also has significant international HIV research experience. She spent several years working on HIV-prevention programs in sub-Saharan Africa, in Zaire, Malawi and Zambia. Since 2002, Dr. Priddy has been a co-investigator with Dr. del Rio of an NIH-funded study of medical transmission of HIV, and with Ethiopian investigators on a Doris Duke Foundation funded study to develop alternative laboratory monitoring techniques for HIV infection in Ethiopia. Dr. Priddy will serve as an Associate Director of the Emory AITRP.

Finally, we are happy to inform you that Dr. Henry Blumberg (3rd from left in photo on pg. 2) recently obtained funding from the NIH for his proposal entitled "The Emory-Georgia Tuberculosis Research Training Program (EGTB-RTP)". Dr. Blumberg is Professor of Medicine and Program Director, Division of Infectious Diseases at the Emory University School of Medicine (EUSM) and Professor of Epidemiology at the Emory Rollins School of Public Health. His research interests have included tuberculosis, clinical research training, and hospital and molecular epidemiology. As a result of this new training grant, the training program will now be called the Emory International Training and Research Program on AIDS, Tuberculosis and Other Infectious Diseases". This will allow better coordination and interaction of international trainees interested on HIV/AIDS and Tuberculosis.

This year we would like to publish our newsletter every quarter with current events of our former trainees and their families, as well as information on grants and other items of news that may be of interest to you.

Please send your information to Maria to be included in future newsletters.

Best wishes for a terrific New Year!

Carlos del Rio, MD, FACP



Picture with Sandra Elisabeth Roelofs, wife of the President of Georgia, Mikhaeli Shaakashvili during her recent visit to Atlanta.

CURRENT EMORY AITRP FELLOWS

HONG NGUYEN is a first-year Fogarty fellow in the Department of Global Health at the Rollins School of Public Health. Before coming to Emory, she worked for the CDC Global AIDS Program in Vietnam for over 5 years with responsibilities related to office administration, research and training projects, program development and management. During the past 3 years, she was directly and largely involved in the CDC/GAP-supported HIV Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT) program. The purpose of this program is to assist the Ministry of Health of Vietnam (MOH) and provinces in establishing VCT services targeting high risk populations including injecting drug users (IDU) and commercial sex workers (CSW) and their sex partners. Miss Nguyen was chief of the CDC's VCT section and was responsible for providing technical assistance to the MOH staff in developing VCT training and implementation manuals, providing VCT training to provincial VCT counselors, and monitoring the provision of VCT services.

At Emory, Hong hopes to obtain official and systematic training in public health research methodologies and skills that will help her provide better HIV prevention in Vietnam. She has chosen her concentration track as community health and development/leadership as she is very interested in working with communities where needs are great. Her ambition is to assist them in developing a HIV prevention approach that is cost-effective, sustainable and culturally appropriate.

DUC BUI NGUYEN is a first-year Fogarty fellow in the Masters of Science and Clinical Research Program (MSCR). He received his M.D. in 2000 from Hanoi Medical University. From 2001 to 2004, he worked as a resident in the National Institute for Clinical Research in Tropical Diseases, Bach Mai Hospital, Hanoi. His experience involved tropical and infectious diseases including SARS, avian flu and notably, HIV/AIDS on which he devoted half of his residency. Dr. Nguyen served actively on a SARS team during the 2003 outbreak in Hanoi, and he was granted an award from the

Vietnamese Prime Minister for his contribution to the control and prevention of the disease.

Duc's academic work began early in medical school when he was co-author of several articles, including one on color blindness among pilot trainees and three on tumor suppressor genes. His current interest is the clinical and epidemiological aspects of HIV and he has received advanced training in HIV/AIDS and epidemiology. While in Atlanta he has joined the Global AIDS Program at CDC and is working on HIV/AIDS related projects including the development of a package of Basic Preventive Care Options for HIV infected persons and TB/HIV co-infection in Uganda. After obtaining his degree at Emory his plan is to return to Vietnam and work in HIV prevention and care research as the PEPFAR program is being rolled out in that country.

PAULINA REBOLLEDO is a second-year Fogarty fellow from Mexico in the MSCR program. She obtained her medical degree from La Salle University School of Medicine in 2003. She also served as a Public Health Educator on Sanitation and Health Maintenance in low-income, low-resource populations. Prior to coming to Emory she worked on HIV/AIDS clinical research at the National Institute of Nutrition and Medical Sciences in Mexico City. While at Emory Paulina has gained experience in clinical research by working as a Research study coordinator for the Emory AIDS Clinical Trials Unit and CFAR Clinical Core under the mentorship of Dr. Jeffrey Lennox. Upon completion of the MSCR program she plans to pursue a residency in Internal Medicine and Infectious Diseases before returning to Mexico.

AKAKI TURKIA, a second-year Fogarty fellow is currently a graduate student in residence after completing and defending his thesis for the MPH program in International Health. Koka was born and raised in Tbilisi, Georgia and graduated from Tbilisi Medical University in 2000. His primary interests have been in Infectious Diseases, in particular HIV/AIDS and viral Hepatitis, as well as Reproductive Health. Since 1996, he has worked at the Georgian Infectious Diseases, AIDS and Clinical Immunology Research Center and led the peer education program. He later joined the department of HIV/AIDS Prevention and Epidemiology as a physician-epidemiologist. He joined Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF)-Greece in 1999 as a counselor and health educator and at the end of the year, he joined MSF Holland. Dr. Turkia worked in China for eight months on the HIV/AIDS & STIs Awareness Project where he designed a KABP (Knowledge, Attitude, Behavior & Practice) survey and led various prevention activities. In 2001, at the HIV/AIDS Patient Support Foundation in Georgia, he founded and chaired the Ethics Committee - IRB. This was the first Western-style IRB in Georgia and one of the first IRBs in the former Soviet Union countries that was registered with the NIH. This year he began working with the Emory AIDS Clinical Trials Group (ACTG) as a study coordinator where he hopes to increase

his understanding of clinical trial design and implementation.

ARCHIL UNNILASHVILI is a first-year Fogarty fellow. He is a native of Mtskheta, Georgia and graduated in 2003 from Tbilisi State Medical University. In the spring of 2000, he was elected as a member and head of the Health Care Committee at the Georgian Youth Parliament, for two years. In September 2001, Dr. Undilashvili was hired as an assistant of the AIDS Prevention Department at the Infectious Diseases AIDS & Clinical Immunology Research Center in Tbilisi, Georgia. During his work in Georgia he he gained experience in HIV/AIDS and viral hepatitis, and published papers on HIV/AIDS prevention. Dr. Undilashvili was involved in several state and international preventive and research projects, such as a study of the "Prevalence of Hepatitis B and C in Tbilisi" funded by the Biotechnology Engagement Program of the Department of Health and Human Services and in the drafting of the proposal submitted by Georgia to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. The latter proposal was successful and brought to Georgia \$12 million US dollars for HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment. In the summer of 2004, he was accepted by the Emory AIDS International Training and Research Program (AITRP) as a Fogarty Fellow, and is now a first year student of Emory Rollins School of Public Health, in the Department of International Health.

BELLINGTON VWALIKA is a first-year Fogarty fellow and a Senior Registrar in Obstetrics and Gynecology at the University Teaching Hospital in Lusaka-Zambia and a long time collaborator with the Zambia-Emory HIV Research project established in Lusaka in 1994. Dr. Vwalika completed his training in Zambia and Ireland and is currently enrolled in the Masters in Epidemiology Program through distance learning at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. His research interests include integration of family planning and HIV prevention strategies, HIV vaccine trial preparedness, and ARV management. Dr. Vwalika is an ARV management trainer for the government of Zambia and has assisted with the national 'roll-out' of ARV.

KAYITESI KAYITENKORE is a first-year Fogarty fellow and is the Medical Director of Emory's Project San Francisco (PSF) in Kigali, Rwanda. After completing her medical training in Belgium in 1991 she pursued further training in Dermatology in South Africa. Dr. Kayitesi returned to Rwanda in 1999 and was one of the first physicians to initiate ARV therapy in that country. Until 2003, she was Assistant Clinical Director of the King Faisal government hospital and provided her expertise during the development of the National Guidelines for ARV management. Since January of 2004, she is the Medical director for Emory's PSF in Kigali. At that site she oversees outpatient clinical care including OI prophylaxis and ARV therapy for research subjects who are followed at PSF. Dr.

Kayitesi continues to provide her expertise to TRAC on various technical working groups related to HIV clinical care. She has completed specialized training in ARV management and clinical trial methods relevant to HIV vaccine trials. Dr. Kayitesi is currently completing her Masters in Epidemiology through distance learning at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

HIV/AIDS SEMINAR SERIES

This past year Emory was selected as "one of fifteen universities nationwide to host Humphrey Fellows based on their excellence in relevant areas; Emory and Tulane are the only two public-health campuses. There are 13 Humphrey Fellows in residence this year at Rollins, the largest class in the program's 11-year history at Emory. The State Department increased funding this year with the proviso that participating institutions would emphasize the global AIDS pandemic and a large majority of this year's Humphrey class will be doing just that." This program is directed by Dr. Phillip Brachman, Professor of Global Health at the Rollins School of Public Health. In partnership with the AITRP, the Humphrey and Muskie programs have instituted a bi-monthly seminar series that hopes to provide our various fellows with a variety of personal accounts and lectures in a "small group format" by bringing local experts in AIDS research, prevention and care.

Below is a list of speakers of topics that the seminar has had this semester. In the future we hope to have their lectures taped and put on our website for past fellows and others to see.

Dr. Carlos del Rio, RSPH – The Global Epidemiology of HIV/AIDS in 2004

Dr. James Curran, Dean, RSPH – History of HIV/AIDS and the Institute of Medicine Report on expanding access to ARV therapy

Dr. Michael St. Louis, CDC – The Evolving U.S. Government Approach to Global HIV/AIDS

Dr. Susan Allen, RSPH – Counseling and Testing for Couples

Dr. Eugene McCray, CDC – The Global AIDS Program

Dr. Larisa Strbinski, EUSM – The 3 x 5 initiative of WHO

Dr. R.J. Simonds, CDC – Pediatric HIV/AIDS, Maternal-Child Transmission

The semester ended with a presentation by two current AITRP Fellows, **Drs., Kayitesi Kayitenkore and Bellington Vwalika** and one former AITRP Fellow, **Dr. Etienne Karita** entitled "Prevention and Care Research in Africa: Experience of Former and Current Fogarty Fellows".

Next semester we are looking forward to continuing this series.

FEATURED FELLOW:

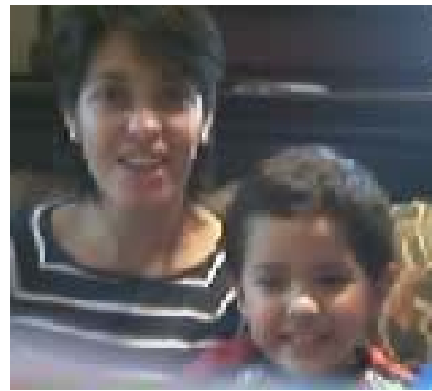
Dr. Miguel Cashat Cruz

Colleagues,

It is an honor to be in the "spotlight" for our first newsletter. Bienvenidos. Feliz año Nuevo 2005

Since leaving the Emory AITRP program in 2001, I have returned to Mexico, working at the Hospital Infantil de Mexico Federico Gómez, a National Institute of Health of Mexico for Tertiary care of sick children. I am currently Director of the Pediatric AIDS Clinic (CLINDI) and Head of the Department of Epidemiology. Also in 2001, I received a grant from NIH (NICHD) to be part of an International Latin-American group (NISDI) in order to participate in surveillance studies about Pediatric and Perinatal AIDS. Primarily, my interests have been in the areas of Pediatric AIDS and Hospital Epidemiology (Nosocomial Infections).

The staff who work with me include 3 physicians, 9 nurses and 5 administrators. Our group has projects on Pediatric AIDS and nosocomial infections. On pediatric AIDS we have been working on several clinical trials phase II, an NIH protocol, on Nutrition & HIV, and on metabolic disorders associated with HIV and antiretroviral therapy. On nosocomial Infections (NI), we have been doing several studies on risk factors, outbreaks and workshops to reduce the incidence of NI in pediatric hospitals. Currently we are also part of the Baylor International Pediatric AIDS Initiative and we are looking forward to participate in a new project with Drs. Steven Nesheim and Carlos del Rio.



My wife (Gabriela) and I are the proud parents of a child 3 years of age, Miguel Alejandro. Moreover, we are very excited since we are expecting a new child (boy) for next year (March 2005).

I am thankful for the opportunities the Fogarty Program have afforded me and encourage our new fellows to take advantage of the opportunity you've been given to make this a stepping-stone to your future.

MIGUEL CASHAT-CRUZ MD, MSc.

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A MESSAGE from Maria...

You will soon notice that our website will be changing a bit. While we're making changes, please visit the website and let me know if there is anything you would like to change or add. It would be great if we can add more recent info to your bio, and let people who visit the website know how contact you now.

Although we have emailed this newsletter to you, in the future we would also like to send the newsletter via regular mail. Please send me your current contact information.

I am also interested in voluntary contributions to our newsletter, especially our "Featured Fellow" section.

Also, keep us abreast of your news. We want to inform your fellow trainees of grants you've received, articles you've published, as well as personal successes. Email me at masulli@sph.emory.edu. I'll look forward to hearing from you.

Salud, Maria

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